

Start new traditions for Christmas

Traditions and Christmas go hand in hand. We all enjoy these annual rituals that provide a sense of community and continuity from year to year. Here are some ideas for new traditions you may want to include this year.

At Home

- * Include one of every family member's favorite foods in the Christmas meal. Who says pizza can't be served alongside

the turkey?!

- * Host a Christmas Eve afternoon tea/potluck. You supply the fragrant, gourmet coffee and tea and your favorite home-baked treat, and ask each guest to bring one of his or her favorite homebaked goodies, also.

- * Have a "traveling dinner" with family and friends. Drinks and hors d'oeuvres at one house, main course at another,

and so on.

- * Try an "international" Christmas - learn the customs and traditional foods of other countries and adopt a few of them for your celebration this year.

- * Start a collection of Christmas china and dishes, then add a new piece each year.

- * Start a Christmas scrapbook - paste in photos, pieces of your favorite wrapping paper, bows,

Christmas cards, etc. Make notes in the book, too. Each year, add to your scrapbook and read notes aloud on Christmas Eve.

- * Videotape or audiotape family members during the Christmas celebration. Send it to faraway family or save it for reminiscing.

- * Give a special ornament, labeled and dated, to each family member.

- * As a family, visit local pageants, special performances, sing-alongs, tree-lighting ceremonies, etc.

- * Choose a charity and make a contribution in your family's name.

- * Visit a nursing home on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. Many nursing home residents have no family to share the holidays with - share yours with someone who is lonely.

- * Take family walks in your neighborhood to look at Christmas lights.

- * If you traditionally don't open presents until Christmas morning, choose just one present to open Christmas night, or open your Christmas stocking.

- * Have an "undecorating party" to help mitigate the after-holidays letdown. People will have more time now with the Christmas rush behind them, and will enjoy an informal afternoon or evening leisurely undecorating the tree and house. Make it simple - just serve finger foods and light snacks.

At the Office

- * Gather up the gang and go caroling from office to office in your building, or go after work.

- * Decorate and donate a tree to a family who might otherwise not have one.

- * Welcome in the holidays with co-workers with an in-office luncheon buffet. Sign everyone up to bring a favorite food, drink or decoration.

- * Adopt a needy family now for the entire year.

Tips for decorating

- * Garland doorways, stairs and windows with cedar boughs, giant pinecones and red ribbons.

- * Fill wooden bowls and baskets with nuts, pinecones and cinnamon sticks and place on side tables or in hallways. The rich muted colors and nostalgic fragrances will delight the senses.

- * Arrange clementines in pretty glass or ceramic bowls and tie with bright ribbons.

- * Invite family and friends to relax and linger over an assortment of unshelled nuts set by the fire.

- * Cheer up kitchen windows with colorful jars of preserves.

- * Fill a basket with rose hips and white-sprayed birch branches. Tie with a bright plaid ribbon and you'll have a natural arrangement that will last all winter long!

GOOD NEWS From the Bridle Post.

Rare exhibit of works by artist Jeremie Giles

Fields of flowers, barren rocky coasts, towering jack pines, magical northern lights... Canadian landscape artist Jeremie Giles explores nature's wilderness, capturing its richness on canvas.

Jeremie is exhibiting approximately 40 of his works at the Bridle Post of Unionville Sunday December 5 to Sunday, December 12, and the artist himself will be attending the opening of the show.

Sponsored by Min/Com Classic Realty Inc., in collaboration with Framing & Art Centre, the shops of Bridle Post and art agent Connie Kerslake, the exhibit is a rare opportunity for art lovers. Although very well-known in his native Quebec and in Ottawa, with his works published in many art books, Jeremie has never shown his work west of the capital city.

Jeremie views painting as an exploration, an adventure - a "never-ending quest where everything is filled with wonder as nothing is ever truly concluded"

Although Jeremie's work is often compared to the Group of Seven, his artistry is unique unto itself. He describes himself as a "self-taught" painter, not belonging to any school or technique, and not having any favorite subjects. For over 45 years, he has been expressing himself through different mediums: ink, water colours, pastels, oil, acrylic and occasionally with clay, plaster, aluminum and bronze. The Bridle Post show will feature works done in acrylic only.

The exhibition of Jeremie's work opens Sunday, Dec. 5, 5:00-9:00 p.m.; Monday, Dec. 6 to Wednesday, Dec. 8, 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.; Thursday and Friday, Dec. 9 and 10, 10:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 11 and 12, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Meet the artist on Dec. 5.



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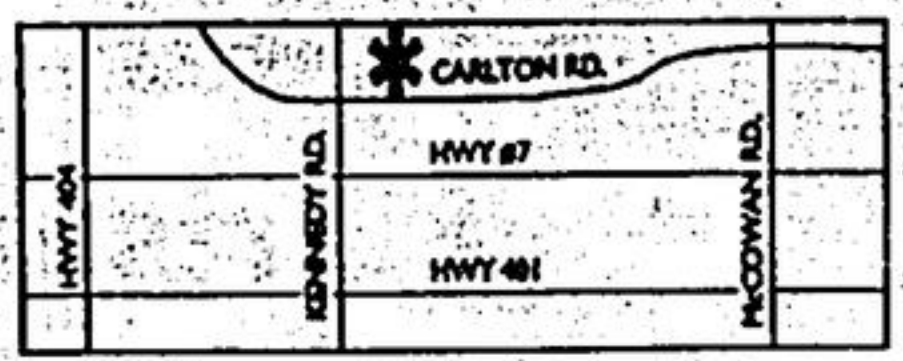

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